

(Washington, DC) Today, Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-Miramar) joined the international community in commemorating International Holocaust Remembrance Day and honoring the victims of the Holocaust. This year marks the 66th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the largest of the camps established by the Nazis, and was designated by the United Nations in 2005 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

“Auschwitz was the site of the largest mass murder in human history. Today, I join the world in honoring the victims the Holocaust and remember the approximately six million Jews and countless other minorities who were murdered at the hands of the Nazis.

“Furthermore, I have joined my colleague Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky and other Members of Congress in co-sponsoring a resolution commemorating International Holocaust Remembrance Day and renewing our commitment to work together to fight against racism, intolerance, bigotry, and anti-Semitism wherever it occurs.

“As a representative of South Florida which possesses one of the largest populations of Holocaust survivors in the world, I solemnly recall the words of German-Jewish essayist Kurt Tucholsky on this memorial day: ‘A country is not just what it does - it is also what it tolerates.’ Today provides us with an opportunity to honor the survivors but it is also a chance to examine our own lives and communities. I will continue to work to ensure that the memories of those who suffered and perished during the Holocaust are never forgotten. And as their memories live on, so will the fight against the hatred and brutality that fueled the Holocaust in order to prevent the same evil from taking place again in the future.

“The United Nation’s has declared this year’s theme for International Holocaust Remembrance Day: *Woman and the Holocaust – Courage and Compassion*. Today, I honor the courageous women who struggled to survive and protect their children from the horrors inflicted by the Nazis. Through their determination, leadership, compassion, and willpower, they fed their families, helped to maintain a sense of community and religious traditions and faced Nazi persecution with dignity and strength.”

Between 1940 and 1945, around 1.3 million people were sent to Auschwitz. Of those, 1.1 million died there, including at least 960,000 Jews, 74,000 Poles, 21,000 Roma, 15,000 Soviet prisoners of war, and as many as 15,000 members of other nationalities, including Czechs,

Yugoslavs, French, Germans, and Austrians. The camp was liberated on January 27, 1945 by the Soviet army.

Congressman Alcee L. Hastings represents Florida's 23rd Congressional district. He is a senior member of the House Rules Committee and Co-Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission.

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